

# Pennsylvania Libraries: *Research & Practice*

Feature

## Getting Your Collection Ready for the Centennial Anniversaries of the 19th Amendment

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The centennial anniversaries of the passage and ratification of the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution are coming up. The authors are recipients of the 2018 American Library Association Carnegie Whitney Grant to create a centennial anniversary bibliography of currently available materials on women's suffrage for the general reader. This article highlights some resources and solicits suggestions for the complete bibliography.

With the centennial anniversaries of the passage (on June 4, 1919) and ratification (on August 18, 1920) of the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution coming up, libraries will be looking to add to their collections. While most libraries will have materials on women's suffrage, supplementing with new materials, updating with resources on topics of recent interest, and checking for gaps in the collection may be in order. The authors are recipients of the 2018 American Library Association Carnegie Whitney Grant to create a centennial anniversary bibliography. The overall criteria for materials include that they be easily available (defined as available from an online retailer or the publisher) and be for a general reader (leaving out textbooks, scholarly materials and the like). Some materials tending toward the academic have been included if they are classic texts on the subject and are easily available or address an important topic not covered by books for the general public. The purpose of this article is to share select findings and solicit titles to be included. The authors are interested in hearing about materials that meet the criteria and that could be included in the bibliography. The complete bibliography will also include children's and young adult materials. The bibliography is publicly available as a LibGuide on the Clarion University of Pennsylvania Carlson Library Web page ([libguides.clarion.edu](http://libguides.clarion.edu) under Nineteenth Amendment) where it will continue to be updated through 2019.

This is a good time to check your collections for classic works on women's suffrage including those that are still in print. *Century of Struggle* by Eleanor Flexner (1996) is the standard text on the nineteenth century women's rights movement. *Century of Struggle* has been called a landmark work and has been in print since its initial publication in 1959 (Lasser, 1987). Evidence of the book's lasting appeal is suggested by the 2017 *New York Times* article that included

it in a top 10 list of books about women who got things done (Szalai, 2017). Flexner covers the women's rights movement from the colonial period to ratification of the 19th Amendment. *The History of Woman Suffrage* (Stanton, Anthony, & Gage, 1881) is also an important classic work on the suffrage movement, available online from sources such as Project Gutenberg. The six-volume work is considered a detailed, though incomplete, compilation of primary source materials and commentaries (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2018). Also available is an abridged version, *The Concise History of Woman Suffrage*, where the editors selected 82 of the documents including works by suffrage luminaires Angelina Grimké, Lucy Stone, Carrie Chapman Catt, Sojourner Truth, Victoria Woodhull, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Matilda Joslyn Gage, and Ida Husted Harper (Buhle & Buhle 2005). This volume is listed for sale by the Illinois Press for \$28 and may be useful for libraries interested in a single print volume of important primary documents. Autobiographies and biographies of those involved in the movement are important to include in the collection. Check for *In Her Own Right: The Life of Elizabeth Cady Stanton* (Griffith, 1984), *Eighty Years and More: Reminiscences 1815-1897* (Stanton, 2015), and *Lucy Stone: Speaking Out for Equality* (Kerr, 1992).

Also significant for coverage by any library going into the centennials will be materials reexamining the movement. The issues surrounding race and racism in the women's suffrage campaign are critical topics (Staples, 2018). First among the books on this subject is Terborg-Penn's (1998) *African American Women in the Struggle for the Vote, 1850-1920*. This book is a classic academic text on African American women and their involvement in the women's suffrage movement. Wagner's (2019) *The Women's Suffrage Movement* is one of the many books slated for publication in time for the centennial. The book's description states that the focus is on diversity, incorporating race, class, and gender and illuminating minority voices. Consider, too, adding biographies of African Americans active in the suffrage movement such as *Sojourner Truth: A life, a Symbol* (Painter, 1996), *Discarded Legacy: Politics and Poetics in the Life of Frances E.W. Harper, 1825-1911* (Boyd, 1994), *Ida: A Sword Among Lions: Ida B. Wells and the Campaign Against Lynching* (Giddings, 2008), and *Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom* (Blight, 2018).

Including fiction, videos, and recordings in library offerings might add appeal for some patrons. A unique item is *Daughters of a Nation: A Black Suffragette Historical Romance Anthology* which is a fiction anthology of four romance stories featuring black suffragettes (Cole, Alexander, Hart, & Huguley, 2016). *The Invention of Wings*, from the author of *The Secret Life of Bees*, was an Oprah Book Club selection (Kidd, 2014). It is a historical novel based on the life of Sarah Grimke who, along with her sister Angelina, were abolitionists and pioneers for women's rights. *The Lake of Dreams*, from the author of *The Memory Keeper's Daughter*, includes a plot line about the protagonist's great-grandfather's suffragette sister (Edwards, 2011). *Not for Ourselves Alone* (1999), directed by Ken Burns, is a two-part PBS Home Video documentary about the suffrage movement highlighting the work and friendship of Stanton and Anthony. *The One Woman, One Vote* PBS Home Video recording explores the women's suffrage movement (Pollak, 2005). It includes historical footage and interviews. The recording, *Nasty Women - Piano Music in the Age of Women's Suffrage* (Goldstein, 2018), includes extensively researched and important compositions for piano by women composers, composed between the early 20th Century and the 1940s. Dolly Parton's song about the 19th Amendment is on the album, *27, The Most Perfect Album* which contains songs about all of the Constitutional Amendments produced by New York Public Radio (WYNC Studios, 2018).

As you can see, the materials available on the women's suffrage movement and the passage of the 19th Amendment span genres, formats, and coverage.

If you know of titles that would fit into the bibliography, the authors would appreciate hearing about them. Ideas for books, online resources, children's and young adult titles and non-print items are welcome. Please send your ideas to [mharhai@clarion.edu](mailto:mharhai@clarion.edu).

## Recommended Reading – 19th Amendment

- Blight, D. W. (2018). *Frederick Douglass: Prophet of freedom*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.
- Boyd, M. J. (1994). *Discarded legacy: Politics and poetics in the life of Frances E.W. Harper, 1825-1911*. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press.
- Buhle, P. (Ed.), & Buhle, M. J. (Ed.). (2005). *The concise history of woman suffrage: Selections from History of Woman Suffrage, by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Matilda Joslyn Gage, and the National American Woman Suffrage Association*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Burns, K. (Director), Barnes, P. (Producer), Ward, G. C. (Writer), & Kellerman S. (Narrator). (1999). *Not for ourselves alone: The story of Elizabeth Cady Stanton & Susan B. Anthony* [Visual Material]. Alexandria, VA: PBS Home Video.
- Cole, A., Alexander, K., Hart, L. & Huguley, P. (2016). *Daughters of a nation: A black suffragette historical romance anthology*. New York, NY: Maroon Ash.
- Edwards, K. (2011). *The lake of dreams*. New York, NY: Penguin Books.
- Flexner, E. (1996). *Century of struggle: The woman's rights movement in the United States* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Cambridge, MA: Belknap.
- Giddings, P. (2008). *Ida: A sword among lions: Ida B. Wells and the campaign against lynching*. New York, NY: Amistad.
- Goldstein, J. (Artist). (2018). *Nasty women - Piano music in the age of women's suffrage* [Sound Recording]. Baton Rouge, LA: Centaur.
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- Kerr, A. M. (1992). *Lucy Stone: Speaking out for equality*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Kidd, S. M. (2014). *The invention of wings*. New York, NY: Viking.
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- Stanton, E. C. (Ed.), S. B. Anthony (Ed.), & M. J. Gage (Ed.). (1881). *History of woman suffrage* (6 volume set). Retrieved from <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/search/?query=history+of+women+s+suffrage>
- Terborg-Penn, R. (1998). *African American women in the struggle for the vote, 1850-1920*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Wagner, S. R. (2019). *The women's suffrage movement*. New York, NY: Penguin Classics.
- WYNC Studios. (2018, September 17). [19th Amendment \[Recorded by D. Parton\]](https://youtu.be/ASx-s0fPzK4). On *27: The most perfect album* [Medium of recording: album]. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/ASx-s0fPzK4>

## References

- Encyclopaedia Britannica (2018). [History of woman suffrage](https://www.britannica.com/topic/History-of-Woman-Suffrage). Retrieved from [www.britannica.com/topic/History-of-Woman-Suffrage](https://www.britannica.com/topic/History-of-Woman-Suffrage)
- Lasser, C. (1987). Century of struggle, decades of revision: A retrospective on Eleanor Flexner's suffrage history. *Reviews in American History*, 15(2), 344.
- Staples, B. (2018, July 29). The racism behind women's suffrage. *The New York Times*, SR8.

Szalai, J. (2017, March 5). Casting a literary lens on women and power. *The New York Times*, C6.